

CLAIMS

We claim:

1. A jewelry clasp comprising,
a first housing containing a permanent magnetic having a facing surface,
a second housing having first and second external surfaces and containing a permanent magnet having a facing surface,
said permanent magnets both being magnetized so that the line of greatest magnetic force is perpendicular to the facing surfaces, said facing surfaces of the permanent magnets thereby adapted to be attracted to each other when positioned proximate to each other and within the field of the magnetic forces,
a safety catch, said safety catch having one end pivotally mounted to the first housing and having a protuberance extending outwardly from the other end, said second housing having a slot formed therein that passes fully through the second housing to be accessible through both said first and said second external surfaces, said safety catch being rotatable about the pivotal mounting to a locked position wherein the protuberance enters the slot through either the first or second external surfaces of the second housing to retain the first and second housings together.
2. The jewelry clasp of claim 1 wherein the first housing has an opening and the permanent magnet in the second housing fits into the opening in the first housing to place the permanent magnets in close proximity to each other to magnetically attract each other.
3. The jewelry clasp of claim 1 wherein the safety catch has a straight member pivotally mounted to the first housing and the protuberance extends from the free end thereof at an angle of about 90 degrees.

4. The jewelry clasp of claim 1 wherein the slot has an outer surface having at least one indentation and said protuberance has at least one protruding nib that snaps into the at least one indentation when said safety catch is in said locked position to hold the first and second housings together.

5. The jewelry clasp of claim 1 wherein said at least one indentation is one indentation that is located about equidistant between each of the first and second external surfaces of the second housing.

6. The jewelry clasp of claim 5 wherein the indentation is formed in a spring steel material.

7. The jewelry clasp of claim 1 wherein the safety catch has a magnetically attractable material or magnet that is attracted to the permanent magnet located in the second housing.

8. The jewelry clasp of claim 7 wherein the magnetically attractable material comprises a magnet or steel plate affixed along an internal surface of said safety catch.

9. The jewelry clasp of claim 1 wherein said protuberance has a free end that passes through and extends outwardly beyond the depth of the slot in the second housing when the safety catch is in said locked position.

10. A method of completing the connection of a jewelry clasp said method comprising the steps of:

providing a first housing having a jewelry chain affixed thereto, a pair of oppositely disposed external surfaces and having magnetic surface,

providing a second housing having a jewelry chain affixed thereto and having a magnetic surface;

joining the first and second housings together by aligning and facing the magnetic surfaces facing each other;

providing a safety catch movably affixed to the second housing and adapted to be movable to a locked position;

providing a slot in the first housing that extends entirely through the housing and opening through both of said oppositely disposed external surfaces;

engaging the first and second housings together to align the magnetic surface of the first housing with the magnetic surface of the second housing abutted together to complete the connection of the first and second housings together; and

moving the safety catch to the locked position wherein the safety catch enters into the slot through the opening in either of the oppositely disposed external surfaces.

11. The method as defined in claim 10 wherein the step of providing a first housing and the step of providing a second housing comprises providing a first housing and a second housing having permanent magnets disposed therein forming the magnetic surfaces.

12. The method as defined in claim 10 wherein the step of providing a safety catch comprises providing a safety catch having a nib extending outwardly therefrom and said step of providing a slot comprises providing a slot having an indentation formed therein and said step of moving the safety catch to a locked position comprises engaging the nib within the indentation.

13. The method as defined in claim 10 wherein the step of providing a safety catch comprises providing a safety catch having a magnet or magnetically attractable material that is attracted to the permanent magnet located in the second housing.

14. The method as defined in claim 13 wherein the step of providing a safety catch comprises providing a safety catch having a nib extending outwardly therefrom and said step of moving the safety catch to a locked position comprises moving the safety catch to a position where the magnetically attractable material is attracted to the permanent magnet in said second housing.

15. The method as defined in claim 13 wherein the step of providing a safety catch comprises providing a safety catch having a magnetically attractable material located on a surface that overlies one of the oppositely disposed external surfaces of the second housing.

16. The method as defined in claim 13 wherein the step of providing a safety catch comprises providing a safety catch having the magnet or magnetically attractable material located on a surface that abuts against an internal surface of the slot formed in the second housing.

17. The method as defined in claim 10 wherein the step of moving the catch to the locked position comprises moving the safety catch to a position where the safety catch has a free end that passes through the slot to extend outwardly therefrom and said method further comprises the step of moving the safety catch from its locked position by pushing on the free end of the safety catch extending from the slot.